

THE MUSICAL WORLD,

A MAGAZINE OF
ESSAYS, CRITICAL AND PRACTICAL,
AND WEEKLY RECORD OF
Musical Science, Literature, and Intelligence.

“Ἡ μὲν ἁρμονία ἀόρατόν τι καὶ ἀσώματον,
καὶ πάγκαλόν τι καὶ θεῖόν ἐστιν.”

PLAT. *Phædo*. sec. xxxvi.

Music is a something, glowless and incorporeal,
an all-gracious and a God-like thing.

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ANOTHER year is now buried in the tomb of its fathers, and with the birth of 1841 we wish our readers as much health and enjoyment—musical, especially—as they can wish themselves. To look back on the musical events of a London season is seldom a pleasing occupation, and the present occasion is no favourable exception. Twelve months have passed away—perhaps more concerts than ever have been given, there has been as much fuss, strife, and party-contention as ever, and as much money expended for the tickling of people's ears—and yet little or nothing has been done as an impulse to music in an artistical point of view. The season of the Italian Theatre has been just as usual—nothing could be done to increase our respect for the superb performances which are nightly heard within its walls, nor has anything been attempted to lessen the musician's contempt of the kind of works on which it is the fashion to employ them. A new lion has been imported for the “stupid starers and the loud huzzas” in the person of M. Liszt, whose playing is certainly at the extreme of beauty as his music is equally the perfection of ugliness. The exercise and health of the people have been greatly cared for, while their minds have much expanded by the habit of reflection on the elaborate and refined structure of quadrille-music, in the increase of walking-concerts in the metropolis. Thus much for the past year's music in its popular application. The Philharmonic, the various chamber-concerts at the opening of the season, and the performances at Exeter Hall, are all that the artist can revert to with pleasure, while two occurrences—the dismal failure of Mr. Barnett's operatic speculation, and the commencement of the attack on Cathedral music—provide him with food for deep regret. The well-spring of all musical discontents and grumblings is the absence of that rallying point for the artists of all other countries, a national lyric theatre. Without it, our composers will never attain greatness in the eyes of the world—without it, they will gradually lose confidence in themselves—without it,

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public taste will still remain unrefined—without it, patronage will continue to be wasted on “sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.” For this most untoward condition we have hope yet left, although but little else. “It is a long lane that has no turning” says the old proverb, and we may reasonably expect that the career of our operatic misfortunes has been so long uninterrupted that it *must* soon turn from that path from which any deviation must be for the better.

Our nature—especially at this jovial season—forbids our dwelling longer upon the unpleasant past, and experience equally warns us to abstain from indulging too freely in expectations of a happy future; so, with all manner of kind wishes for our readers, many thanks for their patronage of the “Musical World,” and abundant assurance that we shall ever be found regardful of the best interests of music in our father-land, we take leave of them for a week, and of the year 1840 for ever.

CATHEDRAL SERVICE,

FROM “AN APOLOGY FOR CATHEDRAL SERVICE.”

OUR liturgy may be considered a tissue of true and lofty poetry. As a test of this, let us mark its harmonious chime with that of David and all the prophets. It intrudes not; there is nothing jarring or dissonant, incongruous or unseemly; nothing to forbid the belief that our compilers were not uninfluenced by that same spirit

“Who touched Isaiah's hallowed lips with fire.”

The very title of Mattins and Evensong shows that the general character of the liturgy may be musical; this idea seems never absent from the minds of the compilers, for in no part of it are terms used which shut out chanting, except where, not the Almighty nor the congregation at large, but two or three individuals are addressed; as in that portion of the baptismal service which the priest is directed to *speak* to the godfathers and godmothers. The sermon being the priest's own composition, and having a didactic, or expository, or argumentative character, quite different from that of the collects, &c. asks for a different mode of expression. The holy serenity of mind, which chanting the prayers is calculated to produce, is not the single object of a preacher striving to rouse men from their sins; and the even manner so judicious in the first case, might rightly be called tame or inappropriate in the latter. Just as the manner of an energetic preacher, admirable in the pulpit, would seem indecently vociferous if it were adopted in our addresses to the throne of grace. The careful phrase used in the rubric is “Then shall follow the sermon.” The lessons, and the epistle and gospel being chiefly narrative, we may not complain of the modern usage of reading them although even they were originally chanted. The commandments, being declaratory, are also generally read in our cathedrals.

It would be thought a strange proposal that would ask us to forego the advantage we derive from the distinct characters in which our literature is printed, that it might appear in the same running-hand in which we carry on our private correspondence. It is an analogous absurdity to desire to restrict the performance of public worship and private devotion, offered up under such different circumstances, to one mode of delivery. We might as well infer from the admonition of the poet,

“Guard well thy thought, our thoughts are heard in heaven,”

that to give them vocal utterance at all is needless, since they travel thitherward before we can express them. But it may be hoped that the petitions whispered in our chamber; read gently at the hour of family prayer, or with a loud voice at the parish church; and chanted with a glorious vehemence in our cathedrals, will alike find acceptance with Him to whom all hearts are open and all desires known beforehand.

That this latter way is not the one in which we customarily express ourselves

is the reverse of an objection. Far removed from the familiarity of manner with which we address each other in common, it indicates that we would approach a Being not like ourselves, and in adopting it we seem to enjoy an antepast of

"That undisturb'd song of pure concent,"

which our great poet points out as characteristic of the worship of the heavenly host, for whose society we cannot fit ourselves too soon.

And is this a service to be stripped of its majesty, and consigned to the smallest possible number of individuals by whom it can be carried on! Does the sagacity of an enlightened age consist in finding out that, by the prodigality of our ancestors, more servants have been assigned to the Most High than are needful? and in so conducting cathedral service, for which munificent provision has been made by large-souled men, as if it had to look for its support to the penurious grudgers of church-rates—beings who would have exclaimed, when the precious box of spikenard was poured out, "Why was this waste!" Impious economy!

"Give all thou canst, high heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely calculated less or more."

It should be borne in mind, that in thus asking again and again for the proper maintenance of the service, it is not its extension all over the land that is asked for; such an endeavour would be absurd, and if set about, its accomplishment would be found infeasible. The service is of too lofty a character, and demands the possession of talent too rare to permit the hope of its being universally adopted. But as that talent abounds sufficiently for its maintenance in our cathedral and collegiate churches and chapels, let us rejoice that in these the wisdom and liberality of other days have provided for our liturgy that degree of splendour in which it well deserves to be arrayed, and by which its exceeding dignity may be manifested. I could willingly see the dean canonized who will first insist upon a munificent sum being allotted for the constantly efficient and dignified support of the daily service in his cathedral, before he assents to the chapters making any division among themselves. From such a recurrence to the spirit and letter of the statutes the stamp of singularity would soon be effaced.

All who feel that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in *cui bono* philosophy, must be alarmed at witnessing the spread of utilitarian notions. A pithy saying concerning the professors of this school has been left (as some compensation for his mischiefs) by one who had pretty good opportunity of finding out their peculiar talent: "Deliver up an empire," said Napoleon, "into the hands of philosophers, and though it be of adamant they'll contrive in a couple of years to grind it to powder." Heaven be praised, the adamant rock on which our church is founded defies even the utilitarian grindstone! But it was enough to make a churchman's eyes gush out with water when he saw a body, reckoning five venerable prelates among its members, yielding to the influence of this heart-famishing philosophy. The reports of the ecclesiastical commissioners are full of it, so far as they relate to our cathedrals; and those portions which refer to the daily choral service are so coldly and vaguely expressed, as to show that it has met with very slight attention, is ill understood, and consequently undervalued by the commissioners. Yet it is treated with as little hesitation as if it had received the full and solemn consideration which it deserves. The utilitarian axe is uplifted, and not only canons and prebendaries, but priest-vicars and minor canons, lay-vicars and choristers are hewn down. The very bishoprics do not escape. Why should Sodor and Man, or why should Bangor have a bishop of its own? "Because they have each had one for a thousand years," would be answer enough (could no other be offered) for such as keep alive the heart in the head; but with the commissioners, a thousand years are as one day, and they have not scrupled to propose that these prelates should be

"With a vengeance sent
From Media post to Egypt."

The people of Bristol having had half their cathedral battered down by Oliver

Cromwell, and somewhat more than half their palace burnt down by subsequent reformers, the fitness of things requires that they should henceforward content themselves with half a bishop.

With respect to her prebendaries, &c. the good old church is treated by her sons much as the good old king was treated by his daughters with regard to his knights; they are lopped off with signal liberality:

"We recommend that no new appointments shall in future be made to any of the stalls of the old foundation, which are not residentiary." (At Lincoln these are about fifty.)

"What! fifty of my followers at a clap?"

In both cases the same gentle insinuation is employed:

"It is to be hoped, that the sacrifices which will be required from the cathedral and collegiate churches will have the effect of stimulating individual benevolence," &c.

"Be then desired

By her that else will take the thing she begs,
A little to disquantity your train."

The reduction system proceeds in each case upon the utilitarian principle:

"If the endowments of these bodies should appear to be larger than is requisite for the purposes of their institution, and for maintaining them in a state of efficiency and respectability, &c." "We are of opinion that the interests of the cathedrals would be consulted by retaining only so many of the minor canons as are sufficient for the service," &c.

"Hear you, my lord;

What need you five and twenty? ten? or five?"

But

"What says our second daughter?"

Why she says, in the true spirit of a cuibonist,

"What need *one*?"

and the commissioners complete the analogy by proposing, that at each of the Welsh cathedrals, the chapter being provided for, "all the remaining property of what kind soever belonging to the canonries, prebends, dignities, and offices shall go to the improvement of poor benefices." Thus, throughout the principality, there would not be left *one* of all those minor canons, lay vicars, and choristers for whom provision has been made by the founders of its four cathedrals, to secure therein for ever the performance of the blessed service for which they were appointed:

"Oh! rather shake the superfluous to *them*,
And show the heavens more just."

By the providence of God we may some day see a Prince of Wales in the land. Let him not come to a dissanctified heritage!

Is it the wretched precedent so long afforded by Llandaff that has bewitched the commissioners? Browne Willis, in his History of the Cathedrals, states that "Landaff, till about the year 1696, had four lay vicars, an organist, four choristers, and a chief or Latin schoolmaster; that they were then put down, or laid aside, on pretext of applying their stipends towards repairing the fabric, and that these have ever since been shared and applied to augment the income of the members of the chapter. It is well worth noting, that when this transaction took place, the dissenters (including those in honest English then called papists), were in the proportion of *one* to thirty churchmen throughout the diocese of Llandaff. The present bishop can tell the commissioners how mournfully different are the proportions now. Who will venture to say, that in bringing about this melancholy change the wrongful act of 1696 had nothing to do? "In a state there are often some obscure and almost latent causes; things which appear, at first view, of little moment, on which a great part of its prosperity or adversity may most essentially depend."

The last sentence is taken from what some one used to call the "Prophecy of

Edmund;" but as most of us are absorbed in reading to-day what was written yesterday, and will be forgotten to-morrow, the monitory book of Burke is reserved for a still wiser age than the present. I cannot, however, forbear citing from it a passage or two more, with a hope that the words of "a being of large discourse, looking before and after," may not be altogether without influence, when it is seen how forcibly they apply to a measure which his English heart forbade his anticipating, but for which his wisdom prepared a denunciation half a century ago. If we bear in mind the haste and hurry by which the propositions of the commissioners are distinguished (and even the composition of their reports characterized); the necessity to which they have been reduced by this inconsideration, of changing some and abandoning other of their plans, and the absence of all appearance of the great minds of former ages having been consulted in concocting them; the singular character of their remedies, and their utter disregard or forgetfulness of what was designed by the builders-up of those glorious foundations which they are disturbing, we shall be led to admit that the author's

"Old experience did attain
To something like prophetic strain,"

when thus with warning voice he cried aloud to his coevals and ourselves:—

"Men who undertake considerable things, even in a regular way, ought to give us ground to presume ability; but the physician of the state who, not satisfied with the cure of distempers, undertakes to regenerate constitutions, ought to show uncommon powers."

"In the scheme of these men I confess myself unable to find anything which displays the work of a comprehensive and disposing mind. Their purpose everywhere seems to have been to evade and slip aside from difficulty. This it has been the glory of the great masters in all the arts to confront and overcome. He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves and sharpens our skill; our antagonist is our helper. This amicable conflict with difficulty obliges us to an intimate acquaintance with our object, and compels us to consider it in all its relations. It will not suffer us to be superficial. It is the want of nerves of understanding for such a task, it is the degenerate fondness for tricking, short cuts, and little fallacious facilities that has in so many places of the world created governments (and invested commissioners) with arbitrary powers. The difficulties which they had rather eluded than escaped meet them again in their course; they multiply and thicken on them, they are involved through a labyrinth of confused detail in an industry without limit and without direction; and in conclusion, the whole of their work becomes feeble, vicious, and insecure. It is this inability to wrestle with difficulty which has obliged the arbitrary assembly to commence their schemes of reform with abolition and total destruction. But is it in destroying and pulling down that skill is displayed? Your mob can do this as well as your assemblies. The shallowest understanding is equal to the task. Rage and frenzy will pull down more in half an hour than prudence, deliberation, and foresight can build up in a hundred years."

"A politician, to do great things, looks for a *power*, what our workmen call a *purchase*; and if he finds that power, in politics as in machinery he cannot be at a loss to apply it. In the monastic institutions, in my opinion, was found a great power for the mechanism of politic benevolence.

"In vain shall a man look to the possibility of making such things when he wants them. The winds blow as they list. These institutions are the products of enthusiasm, they are the instruments of wisdom. Wisdom cannot create materials, they are the gifts of nature or of chance; her pride is in their use. The perennial existence of bodies corporate and their fortunes, are things particularly suited to a man who has long views, who meditates designs that require time in fashioning, and which propose duration when they are accomplished. He is not deserving to rank high, or even to be mentioned in the order of great statesmen, who having obtained the command and direction of such a power as existed in the wealth, the discipline, and the habits of such corporations as you have rashly destroyed, cannot find any way of converting it to the great and

lasting benefit of his country. Your politicians do not understand their trade, and therefore they sell their tools."

"It is in the principle of injustice that the danger lies, and not in the description of persons on whom it is first exercised. . . . If prescription be once shaken, no species of property is secure, when it once becomes an object large enough to tempt the cupidity of indigent power."

"When once the commonwealth has established the estates of the Church as property, it can consistently hear nothing of the more or the less. Too much and too little are treason against property. What evil can arise from the quantity in hand while the supreme authority has the full sovereign superintendence over this as over all property, to prevent every species of abuse; and whenever it notably deviates, to give it a direction agreeable to the purposes of its institution?"

MOZART.

EVERY music lover who visits Vienna will like to know that Mozart lived in the Rauhenstein Gasse, a narrow street leading down to the cathedral, in a house now a tavern or drinking-house, which, by some remarkable coincidence, wears on its front or badge of fiddles and other musical instruments. No one must be so deluded as to imagine, that when Mozart arrived at his own home he knocked at a street door as ordinary mortals do; no, he walked under a gateway, and thence up stairs to his ordinary apartments. That Mozart gave his Sunday evening concerts, and enchanted people in a room on the first floor with a bow-window to it, is a fact not to be despised, for if we fancy the human being, we must give him a local habitation, else he is a spirit, and not one of ourselves. We do not wish to know the great performances of great men, we wish to know their *little* actions, how they walked, looked, and spoke, their crooked habits and peculiarities; and to know that Mozart had a restless and nervous fidgetiness in his hands and feet, and seldom sat without some motion of them, makes him more present to us than the most laboured picture. And here lived Mozart; he who has thrown a fresh grace around the ideal of womanliness, who *could* "paint the rose and add perfume to the violet;" and in love, while the subtle and metaphysical poets are trying to get at the heart of its emotions, gives us straight a language for sighs and tears, for tenderness and rapture. The difference between Mozart and other great composers, such as Haydn for instance, is, that while the latter economize their subjects, he could ever trust to the wealth of his feelings, he saved nothing on paper; he took rural excursions, not to look for thoughts but to enjoy sensation, and began to write when the throng of ideas became insupportable to him. Music was with him, as a certain poet said of verses, a secretion. There is one melancholy of the style of Gluck, and another melancholy of Mozart; that of the first seems like the despondency of a lover who parts with his mistress for ever, the other has more of the caressing pensiveness which one may imagine in a being who enjoyed in a summer arbour by moonlight the song of nightingales, with his head all the time resting in the lap of his mistress. What an enviable perfection must have been Constance Weber's in filling such a mind as Mozart's with beautiful images, in suggesting such an air as "Porgi Amor," or in creating the bitter sweet regrets of "Dove sono." Almost the whole of the songs in Mozart's operas are a continuation of the same spirit which made him in infancy ask his friends, "Do you love me?" and they show that he who asked for affection could return it with interest. As the excess of the passion in a man of genius ever helps him in the completion of the greatest designs, let it be to the praise of women, that besides that one element in which he reigned supreme, Mozart was of all musicians at once the best lover, and the most refined, various, and intellectual composer that the world has produced.

REVIEW.

Love's Vigil ; ballad, composed by Joseph M'Murdie, M.B., Oxon.

This is one of those very *chaste* compositions which, of all others, are the most provokingly uninteresting. It never offends, because it advances nothing that countless repetitions have not, twenty years back, proved to be agreeable; and it never delights, because it is without a scintilla of passion from one end to the other. To such as take pleasure in what is courteously termed "the pure English school," we can confidently recommend "Love's Vigil" as a good specimen of its kind.

Esther's Song ; composed by Osmond G. Phipps.

This little song has a pretty and simple melody—not violently new, truly—but expressive, and extremely easy of execution.

MUSICAL INTELLIGENCE.

METROPOLITAN.

DRURY-LANE.—The programme of the *Concerts d'Hiver* has been a perfect harlequin's jacket, patched with the gaudiest colouring, and spangled with the liveliest clap-traps that the scores of popular music, and the researches of tactitious industry, could furnish. We have had all the overtures that have been matters of course at young ladies' boarding-schools for these ten years—to wit, *Il Barbiere, Masaniello, Fra Diavolo, Tancredi, Lodoiska* :—all the quadrilles and waltzes, with new and romantic titles, and trite and common-place ideas that will be matters of course everywhere, for they can be considered *fine* at no time, past, present, or prospective—to wit, but these have no wit in them, so we cannot specify it—all the solo performers, whose various instruments by daily use in the streets of London have become familiar and fascinating to the gaping vulgar—to wit, Herr Koenig on the cornet, M. Prospère on the ophicleide, &c. &c. All this is perfectly as it should be; if ever an aberration from the classical be admissible, it is surely on the occasion of a general holiday, when the sedate and considerate British public lays its gravity aside and may be supposed, something beside itself; and we give the utmost credit to the ingenuity that has enfocused such an irradiation of musical merry-making.

We must particularize two pieces—the one an old novelty, the other a novel compilation of stalenesses that have not before been given at these performances. The first is the celebrated *Abschied Sinfonia* of Haydn, in which the band, one by one, leave the orchestra as their several parts are finished, till first the leader is left to the individuality of his own playing, and lastly, the conductor has only to conduct himself, which in this instance, we assure our readers, he does most properly, for the audience seem to estimate him a mighty hero left alone in his glory. The circumstances which induced the composition of this whimsical affair are too well known to bear a repetition here; albeit, they seem totally reversed on the occasion of its present revival, for so far from being under sentence of dismissal, the music-director and his directlings seem to be at the very pinnacle of their patrons' favour. The *Abschied Sinfonia* is, though not remarkable for its musical merits, a most diverting exhibition; for that must not be cited as a performance in which the severally leaving off by the several performers of their several performings is the principal feature. The other noveltyyclep'd *The Telegraph*, by Strauss, is an accumulation of the scores of scores of operas, coagulated together so as to form a most gross commixture, and chemically disguised and disfigured so as almost to defy analization by the infusion of some of the adaptor's *idées propres*. We have here a most elaborate web of the most flimsy texture, which is so completely Strauss be-Straussed and inter-Straussified, that it seems to rush by us amidst the rustling of ostrich feathers. It is, at least, not so bad as the *Bouquet des Dames* of the same author; and if not to be admired, is surely to be tolerated as a Christmas gambol.

ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE.—The *Soirées Musicales* of Messrs. Negri and Lau-

rent did not commence until Monday evening. We have nothing to do with the mismanagement that neglected the merriest night of the whole Christmas for the opening of a new speculation, for the loss, in this instance, falls on themselves and not on the public, who could be equally entertained elsewhere; albeit, this loss must have been considerable, to judge from the audience of the opening night, which was numerous to excess. The band is efficient, if not excellent, led by Mr. Thirlwall, not, as we last week stated, Mr. Patey; the chorus is unanimous, if not artistic; and the principal singers are popular, if not pre-eminent. We are bound to notice Miss Nunn, a *debutante* of considerable promise, possessing a rich mezzo-soprano voice, and a pure Italian style of vocalization, who, it will be recollected, was in treaty with Mr. Barnett for the Princes Theatre. She scarcely did herself justice from her excessive nervousness on Monday evening, but she was greatly applauded, having been twice encoored; we shall take occasion to speak of her again when she shall become more familiar with the public. The *debut* of this young lady is interesting, as promising to supply the hiatus in an English opera company, occasioned by Miss Shirreff's retirement from public honours, and Miss Romer's coming forward with private dishonours.

PRINCESS'S THEATRE.—Mr. Harper has joined the "band of brothers" here, but what availeth the trumpet if there be no show? Seeing the jollificating holiday bill of fare put forth at Drury-lane, we marvel that Mr. Willy did not engage Signor Punch for this merry-making week, where vocal and instrumental performance might have afforded an attractive interposition in the concert, and made the flourish of the first trumpeter in England intelligible to the 'prentice boys and maid servants who at this festive season have shillings and evenings to spend, and an instinctive taste and relish, too, for matters that are really perfect in their way, who despise mediocrity of nonsense, and are yet to be drawn into the semi-vacuum of this beautiful theatre, provided this hint be taken, and some good sensibly ridiculous novelty be provided. The only novelty for Christmas has been a piece of antiquity, to wit, a selection from *Acis and Galatea*, which, as we all know, is very fine music, and, in a fitting time and place must be inevitably effective, but is in every respect ill adapted for the gratification of the holiday people. By an apparent perverseness, the adapter has chosen the least dramatic pieces, and so the least generally intelligible, while "Wretched lovers," and "The flocks shall leave the mountains," which could not fail to startle the most ultra-modern appreciation, are not included in the selection. Messrs. Itjen, Champion, Crowther, and Harper acquit themselves well on their respective instruments, and the whole is well arranged.

ISLINGTON AMATEUR CONCERT SOCIETY.—The *Messiah* was performed by this Society on Christmas Eve. The principal singers were Misses Birch, Williams, and Reed, and Messrs. Hobbs, Freame, and A. Novello. The band and chorus were effective, and the whole went off very creditably. Mr. Dando led, and Mr. Henry Smart conducted.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.—The tickets for last evening could not be used, on account of their late arrival at our publisher's.—ED. M. W.

PROVINCIAL.

[This department of the Musical World is compiled and abridged from the provincial press, and from the letters of our country correspondents. The editors of the M. W. are, therefore, not responsible for any matter of opinion it may contain, beyond what their editorial signature is appended to.]

LIVERPOOL.—The *Liverpool Festival Choral Society* gave their tenth public performance on the 21st inst., at the Music-hall. The performances consisted of very extensive selections from Handel's *Messiah*. In the first place, however, there was performed the Anthem composed by Mr. G. Perry on the occasion of the birth of the Princess Royal, for the Sacred Harmonic Society of London, a piece which was received with considerable applause. To this succeeded the rich and solid entertainment of the evening, consisting of a great part of the magnificent music of the *Messiah*, with Mozart's accompaniments, performed by an orchestra and chorus consisting of about 130 performers. The solo parts fell to the lot of Miss Stott, Miss France, and Mrs. Murrow, Mr. Lunt, Mr.

Ball, Mr. Stott, Mr. Earnshaw, Mr. Davies, and Mr. G. Lunt, and they were certainly executed throughout in a very creditable and pleasing manner, and evidence a considerable improvement on the earlier performances of the society. The chorus-singers are now a very highly disciplined and effective body, and they sang the soul-stirring choruses of what may be termed Handel's musical embodiment of the sublime events of the Life of Christ with admirable precision, and, in some instances, thrilling effect. The splendid chorus, "For unto us a child is born," was no sooner concluded than there was an unanimous call for an encore. The recitative, "He was cut off," sweetly and plaintively sung by Miss France, wanted only a little more display of feeling to entitle it to the repetition which was asked for by a portion of the audience. On the second occasion, however, the lady went through the part in an improved manner. Miss Stott sang the air "Rejoice greatly," and the recitative "There were shepherds," in a style which indicated that she is a good musician, and will most probably become an excellent singer. Her voice is very agreeable, and has considerable power. The evening's entertainment was altogether truly a delightful one, and was well received by a crowded audience.

PRESTON.—*Choral Society.*—The first public rehearsal of this Society was held in the Corn Exchange on the 22nd inst., and the performances were all given in a manner well calculated to establish the high claims which the Society had before obtained. Miss Graham, of Manchester, was the principal vocalist, and she must have been highly gratified by the warm reception that was given to all her efforts. She received a loud and a very well-deserved encore for the "Infant's Prayer," which she sang with fine taste, and evidently under the deep feelings which that beautiful poetic prayer is so well adapted to inspire. The first part was selected chiefly from the *Creation*; and the second a selection from Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, &c. The grand chorus, "March into the Mount of Olives," by the last named composer, was given in a most splendid style, and was very loudly applauded. Mr. S. R. Grimshaw, Mr. Riley, Mr. Outhwaite, and Mr. Lunt took prominent parts in the concert, and their talents were fully appreciated; but it would be an act of injustice to withhold the meed of unqualified approbation from the other persons who assisted in the concert; for it is to the high credit of this Society's efforts, that they are not so much distinguished for a snatch of excellence in this and another in that individual's singing or playing, as for the great precision and harmonious powerful effect with which their whole united performances are given. The audience was exceedingly numerous, and departed highly delighted with the rehearsal.

BIRMINGHAM.—A grand performance of music took place on Monday, the 22nd inst., at the Town-hall, in behalf of the charity for the distressed housekeepers. The band and chorus comprised two hundred, and was ably led by Blagrove. The *Creation* was performed entire, Miss Birch, and Messrs. Hobbs and Machin singing the principal solos. Miss Birch maintained her high reputation, and was in excellent voice. Hobbs gave "In native worth" with great chasteness and purity of voice, and Machin sang "Now Heaven," and "Rolling in foaming billows," with great power and spirit. The duet, "By thee, with bliss," by Miss Birch and Machin, was quite a gem. In the evening there was a miscellaneous concert, comprising all the music in fashion. Miss Birch and Miss H. Cawse sang the "Sub-Aria," and were encored; and the same compliment was paid to Machin in a new ballad of Knight's, "Old Time is still a flying," and Hobbs in "Alexis," which had the addition of Lindley's violoncello. Blagrove played a concerto with consummate ability, as did Lindley. Mr. Pearsall sang the "Sailor's Journal" in good style. Miss Cawse gave the "Angels whisper" very nicely. The hall was but thinly attended.

OBITUARY.

MR. THOMAS BINFIELD, the well known violoncellist and member of the Royal Society of Musicians, died at his residence in Howland-street, on Wednesday, the 23rd inst., after a long and severe illness, very widely lamented by professional and private friends. He was also a talented performer on the piano-forte and violin, and was brother to the Messrs. Binfield of Reading.

MISCELLANEOUS.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC.—The "severely contested" election for the King's Scholarship is decided in favour of Miss Emma Bendixen and Mr. Cronin, who, besides the advantage of two years' gratuitous education in the Academy, obtain the leading testimonial of being pre-eminent in a most highly talented competition.

ROYAL SOCIETY OF MUSICIANS.—At the Christmas general meeting of this excellent institution, Mr. Horsley in the chair, the annual report was read, which stated that the sum of 2492*l.* 8*s.* 1*d.* had been appropriated, in 1840, to the objects for which the society was established in 1738. The sum of 44*l.* 2*s.* was voted to be distributed among seven of the oldest widows, claimants on the fund, exclusively of their regular allowances; and 60*l.* was divided among a number of distressed members of the musical profession, having no claim on the society. Total donations presented 104*l.* 2*s.* There are at present the following claimants on the funds of the society, eleven members, thirty-eight widows, and sixteen children. Mr. Parry was re-elected honorary treasurer, and Mr. Wood and Mr. Watts were re-elected secretary and collector.

MR. BRAHAM is progressing most satisfactorily in America. He has given three concerts in each of the three principal cities of the Union—New York, Boston, Philadelphia—has been everywhere most enthusiastically received, and has netted a profit of six thousand dollars. Mr. Braham's numerous friends and admirers will rejoice at his success, and must admire the good generalship by which he selected the field of sacred music, hitherto unhackneyed in America, for his first impression upon the minds and hearts of his new acquaintance, remembering, as we all do on this side of the water, that he has stood unrivalled as an oratorio singer for at least one-third of a century. Our veteran countryman commences an engagement at the Park Theatre, at New York, with the new year, and we have no fear for his paramount triumph. Numerous engagements have poured in upon him which will occasion an extensive tour through the States and the Canadas, occupying the entire spring and summer, when he proposes to wend his way southward, and winter at New Orleans. He has our hearty good wishes wherever he goes.

MR. AND MRS. WOOD have reaped another fruitful harvest in the Atlantic towns, and are now on their journey to South America, where there is no doubt our highly talented countrywoman will be greatly received, since we recollect no vocalist approaching her in voice, genius, or schooling, to have hitherto visited that native region of birds of song. Mr. Wood is said to be considerably improved both as a singer and actor, and his fine manly voice seems to have caught, by continued contact, no little portion of the science and refinement of his gifted *cara sposa*. There is an eastern adage which says, "you may tell a Persian lily, for it has dwelt beside the rose."

MUSIC IN AMERICA.—The arrival of the Great Western has furnished very satisfactory intelligence of our exiled singers, and of the success of operatic performances in the United States, which, notwithstanding a valuable stock of histrionic talent, have carried away the palm from the legitimate and illegitimate drama and kept the theatres open in spite of pressing times, and the President's election. We are told we can have no opera in London, from the inefficiency of native vocal talent; and yet, at the same moment, we learn we are supplying to others what we have not, and never have had, ourselves. It is a curious fact, that there are at least half a dozen opera companies now performing, the members of which have been entirely extracted from the London theatres; and a very large portion of the music they successfully perform is the production of Englishmen, who, in this vast metropolis, cannot obtain "a local habitation and a name." At the National Theatre, in New York, *Don Giovanni* has been in preparation, supported by Mr. and Mrs. Seguin, Miss Poole, the elder Giubelei, Messrs. Williams, Horncastle, &c., and will doubtless climax the successful career of the *Mountain Sylph*, *Siege of Rochelle*, *Sonnambula*, and the *Devil's Opera*. Messrs. Manvers, Martin, and Brough, the latter said to possess a good bass voice, and great facility of execution, and Mrs. Martin, late Miss Inverarity, are retained at the rival theatre to support Mr. Braham. Besides all these, there are Mr. and Mrs. Horn, Mrs. E. Loder, and half a score twinkling English stars in the same city; yet the English cannot muster sufficient vocal talent for one minor theatre in London.

MR. LEFFLER is on his passage homeward from New York; the cause of his sudden return is a serious indisposition, said to be produced by an immoderate use of *water*, which in that city is considered to be extremely deleterious and un-

wholesome. We were not previously aware of Mr. Leffler having taken the pledge; and we cheerfully doubt the distemper, upon rational suspicion of its provocative, since we well remember our *basso cantante* to have resolutely maintained, in England, a total abstinence from all aqueous libations, not spiritually diluted.

KENNINGTON PROMENADE CONCERTS.—The large room at the Horns Tavern is to be opened hebdomadally for the special advantage of retired grocers, prudential spinsters, and rheumatic dowagers of this popular sylvan *locale*, who, deprived by the wintry weather of their accustomed daily promenade on the Common, have been medically recommended by their apothecaries to take periodical exercise within doors, a subscription having been raised to effect this peptic and sanative purpose. Music will be *done* during the perambulation, to neutralize the discordant gossipings of the assembled pedestrians, and prevent the spread of their little scandals, which might otherwise prove unharmonious to the ears of implicated neighbours present. Copious fresh air will be administered to the assembly, in extracts from Strauss and Musard, under the dispensing direction of Mr. Toulmin.

FRANKLIN'S MUSICAL GLASSES.—A correspondent informs us that "he saw the identical set of musical glasses mentioned in our last number, at a house in Gower-street, some five or six years ago. The glasses, which were placed, as already stated, on a kind of lathe, were extremely well tuned, and florid passages might be played upon them with excellent effect, but slow movements were best calculated for them."

TWO SOCIETIES are now forming which promise to prove of the highest importance to the musical world. The first is established by a number of our principal concert singers, for the purpose of practising together the best classical concerted vocal compositions, of all nations, so that they may be enabled to fight foreigners on their own ground. The second is to consist chiefly of distinguished amateurs, who will frequently meet for the purpose of singing vocal music in parts, so as to give those who seldom or never hear the works of the old masters, a taste for that style of composition; this society originated, we believe, with Messrs. Benedict and Moscheles, and the other with Miss Masson.

DR. BURNLEY, on hearing the compositions of a German writer, in which, though great art and contrivance were perceptible, yet the modulation was natural, and the melody smooth and elegant, exclaimed—"As much art as you please, sir, provided it be united with nature; and even in a marriage between art and nature, I should always wish the lady to wear the breeches."

THE OFFICERS OF THE COLDSTREAM GUARDS have recently augmented their splendid band by the purchase of a full-grown Polar bear, which has been so successfully drilled and familiarized as to have become sociable even with the junior drummers of the regiment, and whose vocal powers so entirely eclipse the choir of cornets, trombones, and ophicleides, as to justly entitle this new double-bass performer to the soubriquet of *Lablache militaire*. This extraordinary acquisition has not yet debuted on the parade, but the private performances at the barracks (which are anything but secret in the vicinity), have given the highest satisfaction to the officers, their fashionable friends, and the admirers of foreign talent in particular; and as we understand that the most esteemed professors are enlisted to superintend the practice and high-schooling of the phenomenon, there is little doubt but it will become the *ursa-major* of musical magnetism in the first circles of the ensuing season.

LORD BYRON.—It was not till after Pope had inquired of Arbuthnot whether Handel deserved his reputation, that he wrote the eulogy on him to be found in his poems. It was after a similar inquiry that Lord Byron wrote the lines in praise of Mozart, in "Don Juan." Rossini was his real favourite; he liked his dash and animated spirits. He was accustomed to say that the best music was always of a lively kind. But even of Rossini's airs he invariably selected his favourites from the most blustering.—*Leigh Hunt's Byron and his Contemporaries.*

ALL THE OPERAS OF METASTASIO were set to music by his friend Jomelli; and also his eight oratorios, among which the most celebrated are *Isacco* and *La Passione*: it is in the former opera that we find the air "*Chi per pietà mi dica.*"

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We thank our obliging happy-new-year-wishing correspondent. The name is omitted from a fear of wounding private feelings.

The letter from Exeter arrived too late for insertion.

We sympathise with "A Nervous Man," but are at a loss to devise a specific for the evil he complains of. If our correspondent has the recipe of some anti-anthropo-metro-nomical balsam, and will favour us with it, we shall be most happy to give publicity to it for the benefit of the concert-goers of this enlightened epoch.

A long account of the "Royal Opera Affair" is in our printer's hands, but the subject is so stale that we are doubtful whether we shall publish it.

We have not decided on the paper of "Philomusicians." Will he consent to curtailment?

"P. B. J.'s" letter is of too personal a nature for insertion.

"Observer." Received, and will be attended to next week.

"P. A." is informed that Messrs. Platt and Hopgood, and, we believe, M. Roussetot, are professors of the French horn in the Royal Academy of Musicians.

The letter of "An Old Subscriber" has been forwarded to Mr. Barnett.

LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

PIANOFORTE.

- Chwatal.—Les Favorites Modernes, no. 3 ; variations on Strauss's Venetian Galop (duet) *Wessel.*
 Beethoven's Works, metronomized by C. Czerny, no. 31 ; variations, Theme in G *Ditto.*
 Diabelli.—Come innocente *Mills.*
 Donizetti.—Torquato ; book 2 (duet) *Ditto.*
 Czerny.—Rondo elegant ; Zanetta *Cramer.*
 Burgmüller.—Duo brilliant *Ditto.*

MISCELLANEOUS.

- Berbiguier.—Collection of Duets, 2 flutes, nos. 7, 8, 9, 16, 17, 18, containing op. 22 and 71 *Wessel.*

- Devaux's edition of Standard Operas, no. 20 : Zauberschaute *Cramer.*
 Beethoven.—Collection of Duets, piano and violin, no. 8, op. 24 in F *Wessel.*
 Dangi.—Three Duets Concertante, flute and violoncello *Ditto.*
 Les Amiables, duets piano and flute ; no. 7, Hummel's Waltz in F *Ditto.*

VOCAL.

- Halevy.—In vain ye smile ; song *Mills.*
 Crouch.—Day breaks o'er the mountain *Ditto.*
 Selection of Popular Catches, nos. 4 and 5 *Ditto.*
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London, December, 1840.

JEFFERYS and NELSON beg to announce the publication of their Musical Annual, entitled **THE QUEEN'S BOUDOIR FOR 1841.**

The contents of the volume have been furnished by some of the most popular composers of the day, as the List of Contributors to the work will testify.

The following are this day published, separately from **THE QUEEN'S BOUDOIR** :—

- | | |
|--|-------|
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| S. Nelson.—Merrily goes the mill..... | 2 0 |
| E.J. Loder.—Oh the chances and the changes 2 0 | |
| Godfrey.—Song of the mistletoe..... | 2 0 |
| J. Hine, Esq.—I wander'd by the brookside..... | 2 0 |
| Leo.—The old song..... | 2 0 |
| John Barnett.—The emigrants (duet)..... | 2 0 |

Jefferys and Nelson, Soho-square.

TO ORGANISTS.—On SALE, an INSTRUMENT for pedal practice, containing the notes in the seat. Also, on view for a short time an **ÆOLOPHON** of rich and powerful tone, just completed for a chapel in Jamaica. The visits of the Profession will be welcomed by J. F. MYERS, the Patentee, 83, Charlotte-street, Fitzroy-square.

HENRY HOOPER, 13, Pall Mall, East, where all communications for the Editor, Works for Review, and Advertisements are received.—R. GROOMBRIDGE, Panier Alley, Paternoster Row.—G. BERGER, Holywell Street, Strand, and the following Agents :—

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